



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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***GOVERNORS ASK CONGRESS TO RESTORE FUNDING FOR CRITICAL
NATIONAL GUARD MISSION
“Predator” Drone Mission Necessary for Guard Future, Border Security***

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano joined her colleagues from four other states today in calling for full funding of the “Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)” Program for the states’ National Guard Units. The Predator, a drone aircraft that is capable of flying for extended periods of time and can be used for border security, reconnaissance and battlefield support, is considered to be an emerging mission for the military, and critical for National Guard personnel to be included in training and use of the aircraft.

The letter, addressed to members of the Defense subcommittees of the U.S. House and Senate Appropriations committees, who are preparing the conference report for next fiscal year’s defense appropriations bill, calls for restoring \$76.7 million in funds for the Predator program. It is signed by Governors Napolitano, Arnold Schwarzenegger of California, George Pataki of New York, John Hoeven of North Dakota, and Rick Perry of Texas.

“We write this letter not only because our Air National Guards will be the next units to receive the Predator mission, but because the Predator is one of the most vital tools used by our armed forces in the fight against terrorism,” states the letter. “Our Air National Guard units stand ready to serve our country by performing this essential mission.”

Napolitano fought to win back Predator funding after Congress had slashed its budget. Napolitano and the other Governors risk losing it again if Congress does not appropriate the necessary funds to pay for the Predator mission.

A copy of the letter is attached in pdf format.